

MACO DISTRICTS 1, 2, & 3 MEETING
Tin Cup in Malta MT, Phillips County
May 7, 2008

District 1 Chairman, Richard Dunbar of Phillips County opened the regular district meeting at 10:05 with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call:

Roll call was taken and 15 of the 17 counties were represented. A signup sheet is attached to these minutes.

Introduction of guests:

New Commissioners Donald Oaks and Monica Haaland of Daniels County were introduced. Henry Johnson was acknowledged. Since he is retiring, this will be his last spring meeting. Vern Peterson with Joint Powers Trust; Seth Broesder from Congressman Rehberg's office; Doug Kaercher representing State Tax Appeal Board (STAB); and MACo Staff Sheryl Wood, Harold Blattie, Cindy Johnson, Mike McGinley and Carl Seilstad.

Minutes:

The minutes from the June 7, 2007 meeting were reviewed. Dave Reinhardt moved to accept the minutes. Carl Seilstad seconded the motion.

Legislative Update with Harold Blattie:

Uniform Act

Area of commonality
Administration
Lots of repealers

Harold encourages the Commissioners to examine carefully. SID compared with special purpose hope to combine them.

Water Policy Interim Committee

Subdivisions
Livestock/domestic wells exempt

Gravel pit permitting will be assaulted. The DEQ doesn't have staff to review on time. Let Harold know if they are any new permits. Jack Murnion praised the DEQ employee for the attention given to their gravel permit in Garfield County.

Harold asked- "Do we want to bring up taxing gravel again? The Transportation Committee has turned it down in the past."

Comments made by Connie Eissinger, McCone County, Jack Murnion, Garfield County and Lesley Robinson, Phillips County. Harold said he would do his best to keep us informed.

Fire HB 1

Interim Fire Committee—they hold six meetings outside of Helena in an effort to push fire suppression cost back to local level. They propose to give the Counties stand-alone authority.

Wild land urban interface
Optional

Carl Seilstad asked about County responsibility over 160 acres.—coined "Fire Plain"

Sheryl Wood, MACo, reported on:

Economic affairs

Healthcare

Committee looking to fund EMS in Eastern Montana, both public and non-profit.

They are dealing with and trying to educate new staff at the Capitol.

State Administrator will do a mail ballot pilot project

Youth judge bill will try to find youth to be election judges

Law & Justice Committee is causing heartburn at the time with mental ill and jails. They are pushing some mandates.

HB 729

Public legal ads bid changes. The Newspaper Association met with MACo and they negotiated their rate hike to only \$2.00. Sheryl needs input from Clerk & Records, Commissioners and Treasurers to present at the meeting on Friday.

Don McDowell commented on the bed tax for Hospitals and Nursing Homes.

Bills will be drafted for Legislature.

County Resolutions:

Guidelines were handed out. Richard asked that resolutions be turned in in a timelier manner.

District 5 Cathy Bessette, Hill County, Buffer zone around Yellowstone Park will be amended to add "and elk"

Airport Authority Resolution (Commissioner Briggs)

\$1 recording fee GIS (25 cents local, .75 cents state) intended for grants. They took for administration instead. Some of the Counties are not happy.

Vicki Delger Roosevelt County

Passport resolution

Richard asked for any resolutions to be submitted.

Connie Eissinger handed out resolution regarding Juvenile Detention Board. The funding is not adequate. Resolution is attached. A motion was made by Bruce Peterson, Valley County, to accept the resolution. Deb Ranum, Fallon County, seconded the motion. There was no discussion and all were in favor.

Harold's plea—If you have a resolution, let us help get it drafted and get the process started. Lesley Robinson, Phillips County, asked about HR 2421. Harold says MACo has no resolution. NACo does have a policy. Lesley moved to draft a resolution to oppose taking "navigable waters" out, supporting NACo position to keep word "navigable" in. Mark Rehbein, Richland County, seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Seth Broesder, of Congressman Rehberg's office, commented that Denny has some concern about taking "navigable" out also.

Carl Seilstad, MACo second VP, brought up setting of elected official's salary ie: C&R/Election and Treasurer. "Is anything going on?" "No! Not at this time". Elected official salary COLA 1984 used to be a formula. That was repealed in 2001 with the creation of compensation boards. It was

suggested not to get hung up on the 2.8%. You could see a higher percent now. Bill Nyby, Sheridan County, commented there is nothing in the law that states you have to give COLA. Vickie Delger, Roosevelt County, asked "Does the Clerk & Recorder have to request every year" "Yes". Cynthia Johnson, MACo Chair, asked "Once you've given it, can you take it away?" Answered: "Yes"

Carl Seilstad –survey on gambling

Troy Blunt, Phillips County, brought up the Bison issue in this region. Nothing is in place now but need something. Seth Broesder stated that other places call them livestock and manage in the same way. If on a Refuge, they can be wild animals but as soon as they step off the Refuge, they fall under State livestock law. Troy will work with MACo on this.

Jack Murnion brought up the wolves in Garfield County. They will be submitting a resolution.

Kim Burdick- Choteau County Sheriff's Office:

Kim was representing Montana Chapter of APCO (Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials) and presented a proposal (attached handout) of MONTANA APCO for 20-year retirement for Public Safety Telecommunicators and would be under SRS (Sheriff Retirement System) at 9.XX% instead of PERS (Public Employee Retirement System) at 7.XX%. They would like support from the Commissioners.

- *address stress in Dispatcher job

- *target new hire with incentive

Current employees, having to buy time, must be able to stay with PERS if they want. APCO will send a draft to MACo when they get it prepared.

LUNCH BREAK

The meeting reconvened at 12:50 p.m.

MACO President, Cynthia Johnson, reported a great and enjoyable year. She praised the MACo staff.

Mike McGinly, MACo 1st VP, also reported a great year and commented that the District meetings were enjoyable. If there are any concerns to be addressed, contact him.

Carl Seilstad, MACo 2nd VP, also encouraged to let any concerns be known.

Doug Kaercher – Montana State Tax Appeal Board Reappraisal report:

Doug says the reappraisal date will be June 30, 2008, which is later than most years. The Department will look at housing trends and local trends around the State. This is the first time in 40 years that a comprehensive reappraisal has been done on Ag land. He encourages the landowners to look at the maps coming out and try to raise awareness of the taxpayers before the tax assessments are sent out. He suggests an ad in the local paper sponsored by the Commissioners. (Voluntarily only)

Some questions raised: **What's the time frame?** Within 60 days after the letter and map.

Should there be ag producer meetings? Not enough staff available.

Based on productivity, but what about the high price of land? Ag land is only on productivity.

Are the locals schooled up on reappraisal? They are educated by State Tax Appeal Board.

Jim Courtney, Carter County, moved that we support the ad concept. Seconded by Jack Murnion. All in favor.

Seth Broesder, Congressman Rehberg's office:

He wanted to offer himself for any help. Commented that there will be a lot of new faces in Congress next year. There's not many legislation of any substance this year—election year. The Farm Bill may have something passed. Cynthia Johnson asked, "Can they override a veto?" "It will be tough. They may just extend the current bill."

MACo Staff reports:

CI-99 will put acquired value in place on property. Harold sees huge problems with the Initiative.

I-156 is a mess, conflicts.

Work Comp: rate has been set with a 5% reduction. Letters will be coming soon with the mod factor.

Passport Fees: drafted a request for AG opinion about the Clerk of Court. They should not retain the fees for personal use. Some call it "double dipping".

Questions at this time:

Is it in Roosevelt County's court to request the AG opinion? Yes.

Could it be cleared up by resolution? Would not be opposed to that.

Comment that the Attorney General's office will take forever.

Is it different than the Brand inspection fee? No, they are similar.

JPT legal services: Chief Council on board first of July. Some good candidates are interested.

Bridge access: Public access at intersection of County Road and stream. Legislative fix would be better than an initiative.

Sheryl Wood talked about raffle permits. Her survey results show that the Counties want out. It a hot button item around the State.

2nd Vice President nominations:

District 4 & 5 nomination for 2nd VP. Bill Loehding, Carter County, nominated John Ostlund, Yellowstone County from District 7. Troy Blunt seconded the nomination. The nominations will stay open until September Convention.

FY09 Preliminary Budget:

Harold mentioned the names of the committee and Cindy and Mike. He recommended the attached budget, noting a 2007 increased cash \$50,000 and 2008 increased cash \$47,000, unanticipated revenue and unspent budget authority (MACo only).

Dan Watson, Rosebud County, recommended to include COLA in this year's dues structure. It's included in the budget at this time. Include an increase in membership dues. COLA 2% on MACo dues. Lesley Robinson appointed to Water Rights Board.

Sheryl Wood reported on the Tech reserve, insurance pools- at this point they have none. No server, no backup. It's time to move forward. Long term IT service four year proposal, \$45,000 budget. Donation of \$22,000 for JPI.

Digital Imaging- to copy documents

Video Conference system using Court system now in place. We don't think the use of it justifies the cost.

Legislative Interns \$8,000 MACo portion, Insurance plus. Question by Richard. "Will they come on board January 1st?" November and December for training so they'll be prepared.

There will be a meeting June 26th in Helena to finalize the Budget. Contact Richard, Don or Mark with any questions.

Other business:

When is the next meeting? District 2 will host the middle of August.

Connie Eissinger thanked the group for the response regarding Public Road Law seminar. Miles City and Sidney have both offered to host. More information will follow. Planning a 300 page manual with 1 or 2 copies to each County. Hoping to get as many as possible sometime this fall. She asks that we encourage other groups. (ie: Real Estate people)

Richard adjourned the meeting at 2:25 p.m.